

Bill Viola

Moving Stillness (Mt. Rainier), 1979

Blain|Southern
4 Hanover Square
London W1S 1BP

13 October - 21 November 2015
Private View: 12 October 6 - 8pm

Bill Viola

The Talking Drum

The Vinyl Factory Space
Brewer Street Car Park
London W1F 0LA

13 October - 7 November 2015



Bill Viola, Mt Rainier coffee shop, WA, August 1979, photo Kira Perov

In London this autumn, Blain|Southern and The Vinyl Factory present significant rarely-exhibited works from Bill Viola's early career at 4 Hanover Square and The Vinyl Factory Space at Brewer Street Car Park. The exhibitions illustrate Viola's boundless experimentation with the newest media of the time, which paved the way for subsequent generations of artists working with video, sound and computer technology.

At Blain|Southern the exhibition focuses on one monumental installation *Moving Stillness (Mt. Rainier), 1979*, shown for the first time since its inauguration at Media Study/Buffalo, New York. With a large body of water, environmental sound recordings and projections, Viola's multi-faceted yet serene creation was pioneering in its mixed use of media.

Moving Stillness (Mt. Rainier) is a landmark in Viola's meditations on the fragility of nature and our perception of its changes over time. A screen is suspended from the ceiling above a large shallow pool of water. A projector with three separate beams (one each for red, green and blue light) sends an edit of real-time footage of Mount Rainier to the surface of the water, which then bounces up to reach the rear projection screen. At periodic intervals, the water's surface is disturbed causing the three beams of colour to separate, until finally becoming an unrecognisable pattern of form and colour. Slowly the water settles, to once more form a coherent image after the surface vibrations subside.

The solid, unmoving, reflected image of a mountain proves to be delicate and impermanent as it disintegrates at slight disturbances on the surface of the water. Presented in the gallery as a stand-alone work, this meditative installation offers a rare moment for mindful focus.

Viola's spiritual investigations have always been underpinned by a deep scientific understanding of the neuro-physiological mechanisms of perception. In *Moving Stillness (Mt. Rainier)* he seeks to reveal the fundamental human truths that lie beneath the surface of observable phenomena.

"The 'mountain' is constantly unravelling and reforming. It becomes metaphoric for the existence of the mountain as a conceptual image in the mind. The mountain never moves, only your mind does."

Bill Viola

In conjunction and presented for the first time ever, recordings of Bill Viola's early sound compositions form an immersive installation *The Talking Drum* at The Vinyl Factory Space at Brewer Street Car Park in Soho, London. Two works are featured, *The Talking Drum*, 1979, and *Hornpipes*, 1979–82, that explore the resonances of an empty swimming pool.

The works are sonic manifestations of Viola's work with physical presence, and a logical development following his early experiments with audio. From 1973 Viola, as part of Composers Inside Electronics, began to experiment with the physical effects of audio on audiences and surrounding spaces, exploring the manipulation of physical sound waves through the addition of electronic playback and modulation. He produced audio effects such as *gating* which later became a popular feature of synthesisers and samplers. These pieces were recorded at various sessions in an empty swimming pool at Media Study/Buffalo, NY, in 1979 and 1982 and reflect also his interests in non-western music and religion through the transcendental nature, instrumentation and sonic qualities of each piece. Viola's ground-breaking work in this field coincided with the rising popularity of electronic music.

Restored by Bill Viola Studio, recordings of these performances are presented together for the first time as a limited vinyl edition of 100, pressed by The Vinyl Factory. The hand numbered edition features two full compositions, *The Talking Drum* and *Hornpipes* and an excerpt from a series of experimentation entitled *Pulses* (Duomo Bells). Reproductions of the original program notes and invitation from a 1979 Composers Inside Electronics performance in Buffalo, NY are also enclosed.

The exhibitions are the latest in one of Bill Viola's most extensive periods of activity across the UK, which includes the concurrent opening of *Bill Viola* at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the release by Thames & Hudson of his most comprehensive monograph and the latest leg of the Tate and National Galleries of Scotland touring programme, ARTIST ROOMS, at The Wilson, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. This follows notable presentations at Auckland Castle and The Line, and the permanent installation of *The Martyrs (Earth, Air, Fire, Water)*, 2014, at St Paul's Cathedral, London.

For further information on the exhibition, please contact Laura Callendar at Blain|Southern

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Notes to Editors:

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4 Hanover Square
London W1S 1BP

13 October - 21 November 2015

Private View: 12 October 2015 6 - 8pm

Monday to Friday: 10am - 6pm

Saturday: 10am - 5pm

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www.blainsouthern.com

Bill Viola

The Talking Drum

The Vinyl Factory Space
Brewer Street Car Park
Brewer Street
London W1F 0LA

13 October - 7 November 2015

Thursday 15 October: 12 - 9pm (late opening)

Tuesday - Sunday: 12 - 6pm

www.thevinylfactory.com

www.brewerstreetcarpark.com

Bill Viola

Yorkshire Sculpture Park

West Bretton, Wakefield
West Yorkshire WF4 4LG
10 October 2015 - 10 April 2016

Bill Viola

Published by Thames & Hudson

by John G. Hanhardt, edited by Kira Perov

30 October 2015

About Bill Viola

Bill Viola (b. 1951) is internationally recognised as one of the leading artists of our time. An acknowledged pioneer in the medium of video art, he has for more than 40 years created a wide range of video installations displayed at locations across the world from major museums to religious institutions and universities. Using the inner language of subjective thoughts and collective memories, his videos communicate to a wide audience, allowing viewers to experience the work directly, and in their own personal way.

Music has always been an important part of Viola's life and work. From 1973-1980 he performed with avant-garde composer David Tudor as a member of his Rainforest ensemble, later called Composers Inside Electronics. Viola has also created videos to accompany music compositions including 20th century composer Edgard Varèse' *Déserts* in 1994 with the Ensemble Modern, and, in 2000, a three-song video suite for the rock group Nine Inch Nails' world tour. In 2004 Viola began collaborating with director Peter Sellars and conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen to create a new production of Richard Wagner's opera, *Tristan und Isolde*, which was presented in project form by the Los Angeles Philharmonic in December 2004, and later at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York 2007. The complete opera received its world premiere at the Opéra National de Paris, Bastille in April 2005.

Kira Perov, is executive director of Bill Viola Studio. She has worked closely with Bill Viola since 1979, managing, creatively guiding and assisting with the production of all of his videotapes and installations. She edits all Bill Viola publications and organises and coordinates exhibitions of the work worldwide.

About Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern is a contemporary and modern art gallery based in London and Berlin. The gallery represents an international roster of contemporary artists and is the world-wide representative of The Estate of Lynn Chadwick.

The gallery's exhibitions this year include Ali Banisadr, Abdoulaye Konate, Nasan Tur, Francesco Clemente, Francois Morellet and Wim Wenders.

About Brewer Street Car Park

The Vinyl Factory Space at Brewer Street Car Park is a dynamic cultural hub featuring arts commissions and audio-visual collaborations. This year site-specific exhibitions at the space have included Ryoji Ikeda's supersymmetry and Carsten Nicolai's unicolor. This November it will host Ragnar Kyartansson's The Visitors.

Previous exhibitions at the space include Richard Mosse's The Enclave and installations by Conrad Shawcross and Dinos Chapman that reflect The Vinyl Factory's vision for creating, supporting and showcasing audio-visual art as well as record label releases, and hosting events and performances.

About The Vinyl Factory

Established in 2001, The Vinyl Factory Group encompasses a record label, vinyl pressing plant, the record shop Phonica and music magazine FACT, in addition to all of its visual arts activities. These include new arts commissions, exhibitions and collaborations between musicians and contemporary artists.

The Vinyl Factory produces limited vinyl editions made in collaboration with both artists and musicians, accompanied by events and performances. Releases to date include: The xx, Christian Marclay, Massive Attack, Eddie Peake, Roisin Murphy, Haroon Mirza, Burial, Dinos Chapman, Florence + the Machine, Maurizio Catalan, Pet Shop Boys and Martin Creed.

The Vinyl Factory Press recently launched the world's first mobile record pressing plant and in partnership with the Barbican, it staged the only international stop of Station to Station; American multi-media artist Doug Aitken's wildly celebrated experiment in spontaneous creation.

The Vinyl Factory works in partnerships with leading art organisations. Key projects include Jeremy Deller *English Magic* for The British Council's British Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale of Art, *A Clockwork Jerusalem* at the 55th Venice Biennale of Architecture and *The Fun Palace* at the Serpentine Gallery's Summer Party 2014.